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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the role of nonverbal communication in foreign language learning focuses on culturally-conditioned aspects of nonverbal behavior. Various means of nonverbal communication, including posture, gestures, facial expression, occulesics, proxemics, haptics, chronemics, and syncing are examined, and some of the cultural differences found in these modes are explored. Suggestions for introducing foreign language students to the subject of nonverbal communication are presented in order to make students more aware of aspects of their own culture and to help them appreciate and understand other cultures. Ideas for sensitizing students to the specific nonverbal aspects of communication in the target culture are also discussed. (MSE)

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NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AND THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER

H. Jarold Weatherford

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Nonverbal Communication and the Foreign Language Teacher

Abstract

Communication consists of far more than the spoken and written language. It has even been estimated that as much as 65% of the communication in a two-person conversation takes place on a nonverbal lveel. And much of this communication is culturally conditioned, so anyone who is learning a foreign language needs to familiarize himself/herself with the nonverbal as well as the verbal aspects of communication in that perticular culture.

This article discusses the various means of communicating verbally, such as through posture, gestures, facial expression, occulesics, proxemics, haptics, chronemics and syncing, and examines some of the cultural differences in these modes of communication. Suggestions are then given for introducing foreign language students to the subject of nonverbal communication, so that they will learn to be more aware of nonverbal communication in their culture and to appreciate and begin to understand that of other cultures.

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AND THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER

Language teachers labor long and hard to teach their students the sounds, the vocabulary and the grammar of the target language only to discover that the students often fail to communicate properly, even when they use the right words pronounced reasonably correctly with acceptable grammar. What has gone wrong? Morain explains (1): "Being able to read and speak another language does not guarantee that understanding will take place. Words themselves are too limited a dimension."

Much of our communication takes place at the nonverbal level. Just like the dog that wags his tail and prances toward you with his front paws spread out to convey a desire to play, or the wolf who half sits on his haunches, tail between his legs with his ears lowered and flat against the sides of his head to express deference to a more highly-placed member of the pack, man also sends messages with his body. However, as Edward T. Hall explains (Beyond Culture 36-37):

> Unlike animals, many of whose responses are innate, much of man's communicative behavior evolved independently of his physiology, and like the spoken language, it cannot be read with assurance if one is dealing with a new culture or even a subculture one does not know well.

Astute observers have long been aware of nonverbal messages. Over a century ago Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote (1040): "Wise men read very sharply all your private history in your look and gait and behavior." Half a century before Emerson, when Benjamin Franklin left for Paris on a diplo-

matic mission, he carefully packed his glasses to take with him and later confided to his diary how much they facilitated communication (Diary, quoted in Morain 1):

> I wear my spectacles constantly. . . . When one's ears are not well accustomed to the sounds of the language, a sign of the movements in the features of him that speaks helps to explain: so that I understand better by the help of my spectacles.

Let's hope, however, that the old gentleman also understood the body language of the French and not just that of his own culture, or his spectacles may have led him astray!

Birdwhistell, one of the early pioneers in the field of kinesics (body positioning, gestures and expressions), claimed that all body motion, apart from the neutral position of repose, is significant. (Introduction to Kinesics 10). He also recognized that body movements are culturally conditioned and have to be examined in their cultural context because the language of gestures and other forms of communicating with the body are not universal. Therefore, he observed (Introduction 7), "As a bilingual speaker changes languages he also changes kinesic systems." Misunderstandings occur not only from being unfamiliar with a foreign word or phrase, but also from a lack of familiarity with the nonverbal communication in another culture.

Later researchers in this field confirm Birdwhistell's views as to the importance of nonverbal communication. In fact, many feel that it is often

a more reliable indicator of the truth than what a person says, as Condon and Yousef indicate (126):

> Unlike spoken language, which is used as often to conceal thought as it is to express thought and which people largely control for their own purposes, much nonverbal behavior seems impossible to control.

Furthermore, the nonverbal aspects of communication make up a very large share of the total volume--Birdwhistell estimated ("Language of the Body" 213) that over 65% of the total meaning in a two-person conversation is carried by nonverbal cues.

Today, long after the successful diplomat and cross-cultural negotiator Franklin has been laid to rest, Americans are increasingly gaining awareness that the body "talks," as evidenced by a plethora of books on body language such as Julius Fast's Body Language and The Body Language of Sex, Power and Aggression. This wide-spread popular interest has been useful in making people more aware that nonverbal communication exists, and it is helping to ease the way for the thoughtful language teacher to introduce his/her students to the subject in the foreign language classroom. But before we look at some ideas on how this can be done, let us briefly examine some of the various areas of nonverbal communication.

Posture. Since the human body is the same all over the globe, except for size variations, we often tend to think of all people as using the same positions when sitting, standing or walking. The truth lies far from that idea. Scholars have found close to 1000 body positions which we can

maintain steadily (Hewes 231). Although certain postures are no doubt employed all over the world, others are culturally conditioned. While many techniques for positioning the body may merely represent the normal way within a given culture of performing these activities, others clearly send a message. For example, the Chinese express deference to another person by joining the hands over the head and bowing, while the New Caledonians signify the same thing by squatting (Morain 4). In Thailand, where the head is considered to be the highest or most sacred part of the body, a superior's head should be at least symbolically higher than that of his subordinates. Thus, if a superior sits down, a subordinate bows his head (Tyler et al 132).

Sometimes the message communicated by the body is merely a statement of nationality or cultural heritage. However, even if a certain posture represents only the usual way of positioning the body in any given situation, the violation by a foreigner of that behavior will send a negative message to members of the cultural group, however unintentional it may be. For example, in Korea it is considered improper to cross your legs during the prayer and song in religious meetings (Tyler et al 132). When an American must go past several people who are sitting in their seats in the theater in order to get to his own seat, he does so with his back to those who are sitting. In Germany this is considered rude; in that country it is customary to slip past while facing those who are already seated (Tyler et al 132). We also like to put our hands in our pockets, even when conversing with someone or giving a speech. This is considered disrespectful in many countries, such as France and Germany (Tyler et al 137).

Gestures. One of the most fascinating areas of nonverbal communication and perhaps the one most laden with communicative potential is gesturing. Ekman, Friesen and Bean divide gestures into three main categories, which they call manipulators, illustrators and emblems. "In a manipulator," they explain (65), "one part of the body, usually the hands, rubs, picks, squeezes, cleans or otherwise grooms some other part." These actions generally have no specific meaning, but they do often increase when people are uncomfortable, or even sometimes when they are fully relaxed. Illustrators (65) are physical acts, like waving the arms, raising the eyebrows, snapping the fingers or pounding the table, that enhance or explain what is being said or illustrate a word which the speaker momentarily can't recall, but they have no inherent meaning of their own. An emblem, on the other hand, is used consciously to convey a definite meaning. It is "a physical act that can fully take the place of words" (65).

While there are a few popular emblems which are found in many cultures, such as the side-to-side motion of the head to indicate "no," many are unique to a particular country, like the Germans' good luck emblem, which is made by sticking each thumb inside the fist and pounding on an imaginary table. A third category of emblem is the one, however, which causes the real cross-cultural communication difficulties--the multimeaning emblems, which have one meaning in one culture but signify something entirely different in another (Ekman, Friesen, and Bean 66). For example, Schnapper (134) relates how a Peace Corps staffer was called in to deal with a volunteer in Ethiopia who had allegedly been treating the natives "like dogs." Ekman, Friesen, & Bean (64) tell of an American

tourist in Italy who thanked the waiter for a good, well-served meal, whereupon the waiter angrily summoned the manager and they seriously considered calling the police. What had gone wrong? In the first case, the volunteer, who was working at a health center, had been going into the waiting room and calling the next patient by using a perfectly acceptable gesture--in the United States--of pointing with her finger and beckoning. Unfortunately, in Ethiopia you use the pointing gesture only with children and beckon only for dogs. In the second example, the American tourist had signified everything was okay by making a circle with the thumb and forefinger. In parts of southern Italy as well as in Greece, Turkey and Latin America, however, that gesture has a very vulgar interpretation. In France and Belgium this same sign means, "You're worth zero."

These are only two of dozens of gestures which have entirely different meanings from culture to culture. The thumbs up signal, which means "all right" or "way to go" in the United States and most of Western Europe, is a vulgarity in many places, such as Northern Greece (Ekman, Friesen, & Bean 67). The signal used by American boxers to indicate victory--one hand clasped over the other at a 90 degree angle, held out in front of the body or over the head--means friendship in Russia (Ekman, Friesen, and Bean 66), and that is how Leonid Brezhnev meant it when he made that gesture while standing beside Richard Nixon at a White House ceremony. But how many Americans falsely took his signal to be an aggressive assertion of Soviet victory? What would be the result if an American raised his forefinger to his temple when talking with a German? In the United States this gesture can indicate intelligence or cleverness, but in Germany it means "You're

crazy" or "You're terribly stupid," and it is so offensive and so provocative to Germans that it may under certain circumstances be illegal to use it against an automobile driver (Ekman, Friesen, and Bean 65). In New Zealand and Australia our hitchhiking gesture is objectionable. In Paraguay, signs made with crossed fingers are offensive (Morain 13).

Some other gestures are far less harmful but can nevertheless cause confusion, such as the method of counting with the fingers. In America we hold up the index finger for one, the index and middle fingers for two, etc. Only for five does the thumb come into play. In Western Europe, by contrast, the thumb is used for one, the thumb and forefinger for two, etc. In some cultures one counts by curling each counted finger into a fist, so that by our system five is zero and zero is five. In Europe and North America we point by using the forefinger. In Mexico one points with the chin, whereas American Indians and certain other peoples point with the lips (Eisenberg & Smith 83).

Facial Expression. Poets have always known that facial expressions play an important role in communication. Marcel Proust wrote in Remembrance of Things Past: "The features of our face are hardly more than gestures which have become permanent." Emerson observed (1043): "A man finds room in the few square inches of his face for the traits of all his ancestors; for the expression of all his history, and his wants." But probably no one would have envisioned the enormous array of facial expressions we can display until Birdwhistell researched and analyzed the subject. He informs us (Introduction 7) that middle class Americans control 33 "kinemes" (single, communicative movements) in the face, including nods, head sweeps, raising or lowering the head, expressions involving the

eyebrows, the mouth, the cheek, the chin, etc. Facial expressions are more likely to express emotions than specific messages: the smile usually means happiness, the frown unhappiness or maybe only concentration. Then there is the pout, keeping the eyebrow raised, the stare from narrowed eyes, etc.

Psychologist Paul Ekman recently published research aimed at catching liars through telltale facial expressions, bodily movements, and vocal clues. "Most duplicitous people," he claims ("The Fine Art of Catching Liars"), "unwittingly release a barrage of give-away information during their deceptions." Some of his tips for catching prevaricators include 1) "a prolonged smile or look of amazement that lingers is probably false;" 2) "the body gestures and facial expressions of liars are often out of sync;" 3) "crooked, or asymmetrical facial expressions are usually deceitful;" 4) "in 70% of people tested, the pitch of the voice rose slightly when they were upset, afraid or angry, a broad clue to the possibility that they were lying." Ekman warned however ("Fine Art"): "Even the best liar catchers cannot be right 100% of the time."

Occulesics (Eye Management). The eyes are extremely important to communication between human beings. A very young infant will react positively to a pair of eyes and a smile. Even a mask with two dots made to resemble eyes will produce this result. However, a human face with the eyes covered is ineffective, as is the face in profile (Argyle & Cook 10). The importance of the eyes to a child in the United States is verified by a study in which four-year-olds in America were asked to draw people. Seventy-five percent of them drew people with mouths, but 99 percent of them depicted the eyes (Argyle & Cook 14).

In most cultures the importance of the eyes remains and plays a significant role in conversation among adults. We depend on eye contact as a sign that our partner is listening. As Schnapper says (137): "We do not feel that there is human contact without eye contact." In America, the speaker makes eye contact with the listener for a brief time, about a second, then glances away for a few moments before seeking eye contact again (Morain 8-9). Longer eye contact is generally considered staring and causes discomfort to one's partner. In other countries the pattern can be very different. In Britain the speaker and listener focus intently on each other, while the listener merely blinks his eyes to signal that he is listening. (In America the listener nods and murmurs to indicate his interest.) Germans tend to maintain a much more steady gaze while they are conversing, as do Arabs and some South Americans (Morain 10). In some cultures, however, there is deliberate avoidance of eye contact, such as in Japan.

The area of eye contact also includes the glances (or stares) one gives to people one does not engage in conversation. In America it is considered rude to stare at people, but the French and Germans are apt to stare at strangers, which makes American visitors uncomfortable. Israelis stare at others without any concern, and Greeks enjoy staring and being stared at, so much so that they feel let down when they are in the west and don't get stared at (Morain 10). One can also convey a very profound message by not looking at the face of another human being, which in effect says, "You don't exist for me."

Proxemics. The subject of proxemics is as fascinating and nearly as laden with communicative potential as is the area of gestures. As Hall observes (Silent Language 146), "Every living thing has a physical boundary that separates it from its external environment." A dog, for example, knows the boundaries of his master's yard and will defend them. Humans also have a very highly developed sense of space and territoriality, which they quickly establish. For example, students tend to come back on the second day of class to the same seats. If someone has taken the seat another had occupied before, irritation will show.

Since all people develop this sense of territoriality, there must certainly be something instinctual about it, but the definite guidelines and limits are learned, so one's concrete sense of space varies tremendously based on the culture one grew up in. For example, when Americans ride on a crowded bus or an elevator, we hold ourselves in, because we are taught from earliest childhood to avoid bodily contact with others. Therefore, Americans frequently become angry and irritated in many foreign countries because people seem to be pushing and shoving--when often all they are doing is standing up close to each other, as they naturally do, which causes an unconscious aversive reaction in Americans. There is also a culturally conditioned "normal" distance between two people who are talking, which varies from culture to culture. High-contact cultures, such as the Arabs, Greeks and Latin Americans, tend to stand much closer to their conversation partners than do northern Europeans and North Americans, for example. The distance assumed in a conversation by someone from a high-contact culture makes us uncomfortable and our natural reaction is to

back up to our more comfortable distance. This greater separation, in turn, makes them feel that their partner is being cold and unfriendly, so they naturally step forward to achieve what is to them a proper distance.

In America, if a newcomer moved into an office, everyone there would tend to move his/her desk slightly to make room for the new person. The French, by contrast, do not make room for each other in the same taken-for-granted way that we do. They would probably grudgingly give the newcomer a small desk in an undesirable corner of the room (Hall, Silent Language 157).

Germans tend to be extremely space-conscious, and they often go to great lengths to preserve their "private sphere." Hall reports ("Proxemics" 123) how during World War II German POWs were housed four to a small hut in the Midwestern part of the United States. As soon as they could get materials, each one built a partition so he could have his own space. This trait doesn't seem to have changed. Germans, who are closely attached to nature and hence love fresh air, greatly enjoy a balcony--but it must be so arranged that their visual privacy is preserved. Doors to offices and bedrooms today serve as boundary markers. Germans like to close their office doors and thus keep things neat and orderly. Americans, by contrast, usually leave the office door open as a signal that they are in, unless they prefer not to be disturbed for a time. Even more telling is a recent project in which Herman W. Smith (discussed in Berthiaume) interviewed people at two beaches, one in France and one in Germany, asking questions such as how many people the beach could hold, whether it was overcrowded, and how close they thought the two groups nearest them were.

The French were not concerned with crowding and had few complaints about territorial encroachment from neighbors. Ninety-nine percent of the Germans, on the other hand, had built sandcastle walls around their chosen space and many gestured toward their sandcastle boundaries and used the English phrase, "A man's house is his castle," even if they knew no other English. The Germans also, in contrast to the French, strictly observed the limits of areas marked off for families with small children, nudists, or people with dogs. One-fifth of the Germans had even put up their own sign stating that a particular area was "reserved" for them during a given future period!

Haptics. Closely related to proxemics is the area of haptics, communication by touching. Touching is, as Kleinke has stated (40), "the ultimate closeness to people," because in touching the final physical boundary between two people has been breached. Whether people touch each other or not and how much they touch communicates information about both their cultural background and their relationship and feelings towards each other. As previously indicated, the Americans (as well as the English and the Germans) do not belong to cultures in which people readily touch each other, but in many cultures touching performs a vital role in the communication process, even in casual conversations. Jourard studied pairs of people engaged in conversation in coffee shops in San Juan (Puerto Rico), London, Paris, and Gainesville (Florida), counting the number of times one person touched the other over a period of an hour. "The 'scores' were," he reported (223), "for San Juan, 180; for Paris, 110; for London, 0; and for Gainesville, 2." The Japanese, however, represent an even greater extreme

in the area of tactile communication. With infants and young children the Japanese maintain a close tactile relationship, but when the children reach adolescence this ceases. In one study (Barnlund 106), a number of Japanese teenagers reported that they had tactile contact with neither parents nor friends. Adult Japanese maintain this pattern and also tend to repress facial and gestural display.

Research has shown convincingly that touching is important to humans. Montagu (334) states, for example, that "the raw sensation of touch . . . is vitally necessary for the physical survival of the organism." In addition, even in a "low-touch" culture like ours, touching has been shown to exert a positive effect in many social situations, even when strangers are involved. For example, Kleinke (42) made videotapes of job interviews in which the interviewer sometimes shook hands with the applicant before and after the interview and at other times did not do so. College students evaluated those interviewers who shook hands as more friendly, warm, sincere, and as liking them more. Similarly, in an experiment (Kleinke 42), female students secretly left dimes in phone booths in a Boston airport, approached the people who had "found" the dimes, and asked them: "Excuse me. Did you happen to find a dime in this phone booth? I think I might have left one here a few minutes ago." If the students came close and touched the person before making the request, there was a significantly greater chance that the dime would be returned than if they stood somewhat further away. But touch does not always have a positive effect. Inappropriately excessive or unreciprocated touching can be interpreted as power seeking, as expressing real or presumed superiority, or it can be

seen as taking unwanted sexual liberties (Kleinke 43-44). As in all other aspects of nonverbal communication, nothing can be interpreted without reference to culture and context.

Chronemics. Just as the amount and frequency of eye contact is important to the success of a conversation, and standards of acceptability vary from culture to culture, so too is the timing of exchanges between conversation partners crucial. Uncustomary pauses are disturbing to Americans, who expect their partner to respond almost immediately after they have made their point. Silence between statements, according to Schnapper (137), tends to make us think that the other person is "shy, inattentive, bored, or nervous" and "causes us to repeat, paraphrase, talk louder, and 'correct' our speech to accommodate our partner." In some other cultures, however, such as in Japan, people frequently leave silence between statements. As Tyler et al indicate (113-14), just because a Japanese person stops talking it does not necessarily mean that he has made his point and is giving his partner the floor. There are often long pauses during a conversation, so that one must simply relax and listen. The Japanese appreciate good listeners and they will usually signal that they are through talking by meeting your eyes with theirs.

Syncing. Movies taken by Condon, Birdwhistell, Hall and others of people engaged in conversation and then analyzed in slow motion have revealed the startling fact that "when two people talk to each other their movements are synchronized" (Hall, Beyond Culture 62). Sometimes this is barely noticeable--finger and head movements, blinking, etc. occur simultaneously and in sync with the words and stresses. At other times the whole

body of each partner, according to Hall, "moves as though the two were under the control of a master choreographer. . . . Viewing movies in very slow motion, looking for synchrony, one realizes that what we know as dance is really a slowed-down, stylized version of what human beings do whenever they interact" (Beyond 62).

Furthermore, syncing appears to be innate. Studies done by Condon and Sander (100-101) have shown that it may be present as early as the first hour after birth. Their slow-motion studies revealed that newborns initially synchronized their movements to any speech, regardless of what language they heard. Later, however, these rhythmic movements which tie people together become culture specific, as evidenced by Hall's work with black Americans which uncovered great differences in the kinesic and proxemic patterns between working-class blacks and a wide range of whites. Being in or out of sync can well affect many other areas of human endeavor, not just cross-cultural relations, because being "in sync" (or not) is in itself a form of communication. As Hall states (Beyond 61): "People in interactions either move together (in whole or in part) or they don't and in failing to do so are disruptive to others around them." Being "in sync" creates harmony, being "out of sync" brings disharmony, difficulty, misunderstanding, and perhaps even cross-cultural prejudice.

Nonverbal Universals. Over the years a controversy has developed over whether there are universally valid nonverbal signals (the "nature" vs. "nurture" controversy). Charles Darwin pointed out as early as 1872 certain similarities in the expressive behavior of people from different cultures (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 20). However, his view that these similarities

are innate has been challenged repeatedly, for example by Birdwhistell (Kinesics & Context 81), who said: "Insofar as we know, there is no body motion or gesture that can be regarded as a universal symbol."

Others, however, maintain that there are indeed certain innate kinetic motions. Eibl-Eibesfeldt, for example, cites cross-cultural similarities in basic emotional expression such as embracing and kissing (early claims that not all cultures employ kissing is now felt to be false), the smiling response, and similar actions to express coyness, embarrassment and flirting (hiding the mouth behind one's hand or concealing the entire face). He also reports at length on the "eyebrow flash" as a kinetic movement which he claims occurs across many cultures. It involves raising the eyebrows rapidly and keeping them maximally raised for one-sixth of a second before lowering them. This gesture, which signals readiness for social contact, has been filmed among Europeans, Balinese, Papuans of New Guinea, Samoans, South American Indians, and the Bushmen, and is known to be employed in our own culture. In at least one culture, Japan, it exists but it is widely suppressed because it is felt to be indecent (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 22). The cluster of actions that express anger is also widespread, being found even in congenitally deaf-blind people who also exhibit "typical" facial expressions when they laugh, smile, cry, pout, and when they express fear or surprise. Ekman & Friesen (63-65) have also been searching for universally employed emblems and feel that there are a few, all of which relate primarily to bodily functions, such as eating, sleeping and love-making.

Conclusion. We live in a world which has never been smaller. Interactions with other cultures are becoming increasingly more frequent and their success more crucial, not only to world friendship, world understanding and world trade, but to world peace. Yet, as Hall states (Beyond Culture 9), "We live fragmented, compartmentalized lives . . . . We have been taught to think linearly rather than comprehensively." But we need to leap beyond the bounds of our upbringing, to visualize the complexity of the world and the diversity of human life and behavior in order to understand, appreciate and live in peace and love with each other. Even within our own culture the several subcultures frequently face each other across an abyss of nonunderstanding.

In order to transcend our own culture, there are two things which we must know, as pointed out by Hall (Beyond Culture 45): "First, that there is a system; and second, the nature of that system." In other words, we are only vaguely aware of our own culture--most people certainly do not grasp the enormous extent to which man's behavior is determined almost dictatorially by those values and behavior patterns which we developed as we grew up within our culture. Thus, perhaps the most important task of the cultural aspect of foreign language teaching is to teach people that there is a system, that our culture is a system (but not the only one) for living.

Many times I have heard a student exclaim after studying a foreign language for a time: "I never understood English until I began to study German or French, or Spanish, or Latin, etc. !" Only through the learning of a foreign language did they really begin to understand their own. It is the same way with our culture. Even though culture is so incredibly

complex and so subtle that the best we can hope for is to learn a small smattering of a foreign culture, in doing so it will help us to really learn about our own culture and also to become aware of, look for, tolerate, enjoy, and then act on cultural differences. As Hall recommends (Beyond 45), in order to familiarize ourselves with our own system and to master it, each of us should

> seek out systems that are different from one's own and, using oneself as a sensitive recording device, make note of every reaction or tendency to escalate . . . It is impossible to do this in the abstract, because there are too many possibilities; behavioral systems are too complex. The rules governing behavior and structure of one's own cultural system can be discovered in a specific context or real-life situation.

Unfortunately, most people will not on their own seek to master their cultural system, partly because they will barely or not at all be aware of its existence, but through the impetus and inspiration given in the foreign language classroom, many students will begin to become sensitized to the intricacies and complexities of culture and the potential pitfalls, misunderstandings and disasters which await the inexperienced and insensitive in dealing with members of another cultural group. Maybe even some day in the not too distant future we will finally see put to rest statements like that which Hall made in 1959 (Silent Language 9) which is still all too painfully true:

> Though the United States has spent billions of dollars on foreign aid programs, it has captured neither the affection nor esteem of the rest of the world. In many countries today Americans are cordially disliked; in others merely tolerated. . . . Harsh as it may seem to the ordinary citizen, . . . much of the foreigners' animosity has been generated by the way Americans behave. . . . As a country we are apt to be guilty of great ethnocentrism. . . Most of our behavior does not spring from malice but from ignorance, which is as grievous a sin in international relations. We are not only almost totally ignorant of what is expected in other countries, we are almost totally ignorant of what we are communicating to other people by our own normal behavior.

Application. The foreign language teacher needs to take a two-pronged approach to teaching in the area of kinesics: 1) sensitize students to the broad and varied means of communicating with the body in our own culture; and 2) gradually introduce them to the nonverbal language employed in the target culture. Following are a number of suggestions for incorporating nonverbal communication into your foreign language lessons. Some of them are adapted from the excellent suggestions made by Morain (20-23).

A. Most students will not be completely unaware of the field of body language, but they will have little conception of its scope. Therefore, ask them to identify ways of communicating with the body and put the list on the board. Help them complete the list to include all the various aspects of nonverbal communication, including posture, sitting styles,

walking, facial expressions, eye movements, gaze, chronemics, proxemics, haptics and the various types of gestures.

B. Eisenberg and Smith (Nonverbal Communication 8) present a list of questions designed to help sensitize people to their own communication patterns. They are very helpful and lend themselves well to a class discussion.

1. Do you ever avoid talking to someone because he speaks too slowly or too loudly?
2. What are the three most common gestures you make when you speak?
3. How do you know that someone is interested in talking with you when that interest is not verbalized?
4. Under what circumstances do you say what you don't mean? When you do, have you ever noticed yourself telling a lie with your face?
5. Why do you act differently when you are in your own house than when you are in the house of a friend?
6. At what distance does a good friend get "too close"? At what distance does a fellow student, whom you do not know well, get "too close"? Why is there a difference?
7. Have you ever felt hostile or friendly toward someone just because of his appearance?
8. Do you sit in the same chair at home? At school? At work? Have you ever gotten angry because someone took your seat? Why?

C. Birdwhistell (Kinesics 99-101) has isolated 32 kinemes (individual facial expressions). Have the students see how many they can name, and then have them try to demonstrate any remaining ones listed by Birdwhistell.

D. Have the students try to act out various emotions and attitudes through body positioning (e.g., humility, superiority, sadness, happiness, etc.).

E. Interview a member of the target culture about similarities and differences in posture, walking style, etc. among Americans and members of his culture. Ask him whether he finds the American walking style pleasant, unpleasant, etc. Are there any American stances which he finds offensive (for example, talking to someone with your hands in your pockets)?

F. Discuss the different types of gestures (manipulators, illustrators and emblems). Help them draw up a list of emblems familiar to Americans. Her are a few suggestions (for a complete list see Morain, 22) to use as a checklist:

> Shrug; draw finger across throat; cross fingers; knock on wood; cross heart; raise right hand (swear truth); wave; thumb a ride; shake scolding finger; raise eyebrows; wink; slap on back; finger on lips (shhh); beckon; thumbs up; thumbs down; V for victory; "quotation" signs in air; "O.K." symbol; play imaginary violin while someone tells sad tale; rub stomach; clasp hands above head and shake (victory); stamp foot; hand up, palm forward (stop!); tap watch (time's up).

If there are any students who are from another region of the country, determine if they know some emblems which the rest of the class does not, or vice versa.

G. Find out from parents and other older people about possible emblems which were previously used but are no longer.

H. Have a member of the target culture come and demonstrate emblems from her country. How many of those used in America have the same meaning in her country? Which of the emblems which are perfectly all right in the United States have a vulgar meaning in her country and vice versa? Which American emblems did she already know?

I. Work with the class on a gesture dictionary for the United States and the target country.

J. Examine sexual differences in sitting, standing and walking styles. For example, do women swing their arms when walking the same way men do? Do they employ the same postures and styles when sitting, etc.?

K. Discuss the concept of individual space requirements. Establish a comfortable distance for carrying on a normal conversation as well as a more intimate conversation. Have the class all sit near the back of the room and let several of them come up and try to teach with that configuration. Have 2 or 3 of the students pull their chairs up so that they are sitting almost on the teacher's lap and discuss what effect that has.

L. Try a few experiments with proxemics outside of class. For example, deliberately stand too close to or too far away from your conversation partner and observe her reaction. Another fascinating experiment is to go to the beach and put your things down right next to someone you don't know. (Be careful here--this violation of private space will cause irritation and maybe worse.)

M. Observe eye contact in conversations and report on your findings. In a conversation, try to deliberately avoid eye contact or stare at your partner and observe the reactions.

N. Interview a member of another subculture about their concepts of space, their gestures, their posture, their use of eye contact, etc. Ask him about differences they may have found in proxemic values in the two cultures.

O. Have a bilingual talk to the class, speaking the first half of the time in English and the other half in his native language. See if you can identify whether the speaker changes kinesic systems when he changes languages.

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